



# Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

For immediate release: April 17, 2003 (03-21)

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## **Washington's wheat and barley growers asked to participate in annual crop survey**

OLYMPIA – The Washington Agricultural Statistics Service (WASS) is about to undertake one of the largest and most important surveys of the year. This week wheat and barley growers will receive surveys asking them to identify the varieties of cereal grain being grown in Washington. And, state Department of Agriculture Director Valoria Loveland encourages growers to complete the surveys and mail them back to WASS quickly.

“The survey collects information that is used to identify and market the various classes and varieties of wheat and barley grown in Washington,” says Loveland. WSDA helps the state’s food and agricultural producers sell their products on the international market. About 88 percent of Washington’s wheat is sold to markets in Asia.

“The information is used to compare acres, production and yield in different counties within the state,” says Ray Garibay, state statistician at WASS. “County estimates help to ensure ample seed is available for the most popular varieties of wheat and barley, and play a major role in Federal Farm Program payments and crop insurance payments, thus directly affecting many farmers and ranchers.”

The Washington Barley and Wheat Commissions have provided funds to cover the costs of the survey. They rely heavily on the data from the survey to make sound marketing and export decisions for their members.

“As with all of our surveys, we will safeguard the confidentiality of all responses,” Garibay added. “Information from each operation is combined with that from other producers and will not be published as an individual report.”

Washington ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation for production of wheat, behind Kansas and North Dakota. In 2002, Washington growers produced nearly 130 million bushels of wheat on 2.4 million acres. A bushel of wheat makes 70 to 73 one pound loaves of white bread, and yields approximately 42 pounds of white flour or 60 pounds of whole wheat flour.

Washington ranks 4<sup>th</sup> among barley-producing states. In 2002, Washington growers harvested 340,000 acres of barley, with an average yield of 54 bushels per acre. Barley consistently ranks in the top 20 Washington commodities based on production value. Generally, Washington producers raise two types of barley; barley for feed and malting barley. Last year, Baroness was the favored feed variety with 260,100 acres. Harrington was the most popular malting variety with 28,000 acres.

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Whitman County produces more wheat and barley than any other county in the nation. Whitman County growers produce 44.6 percent of the Washington's barley and 25.5 percent of its wheat.

The results of the survey will be available in mid-July. For a copy of the finished report or to obtain other agricultural statistics, visit the Washington Agricultural Statistics Service's Web site at [www.nass.usda.gov/wa](http://www.nass.usda.gov/wa) or call (800) 435-5883.

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